

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR ZEV YAROSLAVSKY

October 7, 2008

The California Oak Woodlands Conservation Program is an innovative State program that encourages local governments and other agencies to work cooperatively with private land owners to preserve the approximately 80% of oak woodlands that currently sit on privately held land. In addition to promoting sound land use planning policies that will help protect oak woodlands, this program also provides funding to help preserve oak woodlands by purchasing conservation easements from willing property owners and providing other financial incentives to encourage the preservation of high quality oak woodlands and the habitat they provide.

Several northern California counties have begun to participate in this program through the creation of a mandatory Oak Woodlands Management Plan. Given the critical importance of preserving oak woodlands, the County of Los Angeles should also join in this important effort. To that end, I have allocated \$25,000 of Third District discretionary funds to further this endeavor and help provide the matching funds requirement for the Wildlife Conservation Board grant discussed below.

Creating an Oak Woodlands Management Plan will not only help the County fund, design, and implement efforts to preserve oak woodlands, developing this kind of comprehensive management plan will also help the County quantify the economic and

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environmental benefits of preserving oak woodlands. The benefits include but are not limited to: providing enormous scenic value to residents of and visitors to this region; sequestering over 325 million metric tons of carbon that would otherwise be released into the atmosphere; and providing critical habitat for numerous endangered, threatened, and other sensitive species.

To help the County complete this endeavor, the Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains is leading an effort to develop the *Los Angeles Oak Woodland Habitat Conservation Management Plan* to meet the requirements of the Oak Woodlands Conservation Act, 2001, and to help inform future County land use planning efforts. This is an important effort that the entire Board of Supervisors should wholeheartedly support.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors ask appropriate County staff to participate in this worthwhile endeavor and send a 5-signature letter to the Wildlife Conservation Board supporting the Resource Conservation District's grant application for funding to prepare the *Los Angeles Oak Woodland Habitat Conservation Management Plan*.